

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 ICA-11
TRSE-00 SOE-02 DOE-15 CIAE-00 COME-00 MCE-00 HA-05
/052 W
-----015831 040853Z /21

R 031600Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1165
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMCONSUL DURBAN POUCH
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG POUCH

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CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ESTC, SF
SUBJECT: EXPORT CONTROL-SOUTH AFRICAN TRAFFIC POLICE

REFERENCE: STATE 85992

1. AS REQUESTED REFTEL, EMBASSY HAS RESEARCHED POSITION OF TRAFFIC INSPECTION DEPARTMENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA. INQUIRY INCLUDED CONTACTS WITH MUNICIPAL AND PROVINCIAL TRAFFIC DEPARTMENTS AND LOCAL MOTOROLA REPRESENTATIVE. LIMITED INQUIRY ON PUBLIC ATTITUDES ABOUT TRAFFIC INSPECTORS ALSO UNDERTAKEN. FOLLOWING INFORMATION EMERGED:

2. INFORMATION PROVIDED TO DEPARTMENT BY MOTOROLA REPRESENTATIVE IS BASICALLY CORRECT. RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRAFFIC CONTROL IN SOUTH AFRICA IS SEPARATED FROM OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT FUNCTIONS AND IS VESTED IN PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS. THESE GOVERNMENTS CARRY OUT TRAFFIC CONTROL FUNCTION THROUGH THEIR OWN "INSPECTION SERVICES". THESE
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ARE CONTROLLED AND FUNDED BY THE MUNICIPAL OR PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS. AS EACH PROVINCE AND MUNICIPALITY OPERATES AN INSPECTION SERVICE, THERE ARE AT LEAST 200 DIFFERENT INSPECTION SERVICES IN SOUTH AFRICA. THESE SERVICES ENFORCE THOSE LIMITED LAWS UNDER PROVINCIAL OR MUNICIPAL CONTROL INCLUDING TRAFFIC MATTERS, SHOP HOURS, TRADING LICENSES, ETC. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS RELATING TO CRIMINAL

OFFENSES IS RESPONSIBILITY OF SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE (SAP) WHICH IS A SINGLE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION CONTROLLED AND FUNDED BY SAG DEPARTMENT OF INTRIOR.

3. TRAFFIC INSPECTORS ARE EMPOWERED TO ISSUE SUMMONSES AND MAKE ARRESTS FOR CERTAIN TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS SUCH AS DRUNK DRIVING. HOWEVER, THEY HAVE NO AUTHORITY OR RESPONSIBILITY OVER CRIMINAL OFFENSES IN OTHER AREAS BEYOND THAT ACCORDED PRIVATE CITIZENS. SOME TRAFFIC INSPECTORS ARE ARMED AND OTHERS ARE NOT. CITY OF PRETORIA ARMS ITS INSPECTORS ONLY IN CASES WHERE POSSIBILITY OF TROUBLE IS BELIEVED HIGH. TRANSVAAL PROVINCE INSPECTORS ARE GENERALLY ARMED WITH .22 CALIBER PISTOLS.

4. MOST OF LARGER INSPECTION SERVICES ARE MULTI-RACIAL. TRANSVAAL PROVINCE SERVICE IS COMPOSED OF 300 WHITE AND 172 BLACK INSPECTORS. PRETORIA SERVICE HAS 32 BLACK AND 6 COLORED INSPECTORS OUT OF 130. POLICY OF PRETORIA INSPECTION SERVICE IS FOR ONLY BLACK INSPECTORS TO OPERATE IN TOWNSHIPS. BOTH TRANSVAAL AND PRETORIA SERVICES STATED ANY INSPECTOR CAN STOP AND IF NECESSARY ARREST MOTORIST OF ANY RACE. IN PRACTICE, HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE A BOLD BLACK INSPECTOR WHO WOULD STOP A WHITE DRIVER.

5. WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO DISCOVER ANY EVIDENCE OF AN OFFICIAL OR ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INSPECTION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SERVICES AND SAP. THERE IS OBVIOUSLY A LIMITED WORKING RELATIONSHIP IN THAT INSPECTORS WILL CALL IN SAP IF THEY UNCOVER EVIDENCE OF CRIMINAL ACT IN THEIR TRAFFIC DUTIES, E.G., CAR STOPPED THAT IS BELIEVED STOLEN. INSPECTION SERVICES HAVE NOT, TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, PLAYED A ROLE IN DEALING WITH UNREST OR VIOLENCE IN TOWNSHIPS.

6. REGARDING RADIOS, INSPECTION SERVICES OPERATE ON THEIR OWN BANDS. ACCORDING TO BOTH MOTOROLA REPRESENTATIVE AND INSPECTION SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES, RADIOS OF INSPECTION SERVICES CANNOT RECEIVE POLICE BAND OR VICE VERSA. MOBILE UNITS OF INSPECTORS ARE BUILT TO RECEIVE ONLY ON CERTAIN FREQUENCY (80 AND 160MH) AND MOTOROLA REPRESENTATIVE STATES THEY WOULD NEED CONSIDERABLE ALTERATION TO BE CHANGED TO SAP FREQUENCY (37MH). INSPECTORS NEEDING ASSISTANCE OF SAP MUST RADIO THEIR OWN HEADQUARTERS WHICH IN TURN CONTACTS SAP. THERE IS, OF COURSE, POTENTIAL THAT IN TIME OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY SAP COULD TAKE OVER INSPECTION SERVICES RADIO NETS, BUT THIS IS ALSO TRUE OF ALL RADIO NETS IN COUNTRY.

7. FROM LIMITED INQUIRIES AND BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE,

TRAFFIC INSPECTION SERVICES ARE NOT POPULAR WITH ANY SEGMENT OF POPULATION. IN CASE OF WHITES, THIS WOULD SEEM TO STEM FROM MOTORISTS TRADITIONAL DISLIKE OF TRAFFIC COPS AND STIFF FINES OF R100-500 FOR SPEEDING VIOLATIONS. RE BLACKS, WE HAVE HEARD NUMBER OF ALLEGATIONS FROM BLACKS THAT TRAFFIC INSPECTORS CONCENTRATE THEIR ATTENTION DISPROPORTIONATELY ON BLACK DRIVERS AND ARE GENERALLY TOUGHER WITH THEM ON SUMMONSES AND ARRESTS.

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TRAFFIC CHECKPOINTS JUST OUTSIDE OF BLACK TOWNSHIPS ARE COMMON WHERE OCCUPANTS FORCED TO LEAVE VEHICLE WHILE IT IS CHECKED OVER FOR SAFETY DEFECTS. HEAD OF TRANSVAAL TRAFFIC INSPECTION SERVICE DENIES THAT HIS MEN CONCENTRATE MORE ON BLACKS THAN WHITES AND STATED INSPECTORS ARE REQUIRED TO SHOW A DISTRIBUTION OF SUMMONSES IN ROUGH ALIGNMENT WITH RACIAL DISTRIBUTION OF DRIVING POPULATION. ONE ELEMENT HERE IS THAT AS BLACKS TEND TO DRIVE OLDER CARS THAT ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE PROBLEMS WITH FAIRLY TOUGH ROAD WORTHINESS REQUIREMENTS, THEY FORM A NATURAL TARGET FOR ROVING VEHICLE INSPECTION UNITS. ALSO, BLACKS FIND IT DIFFICULT TO PASS LICENSING TESTS AND ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE CARRYING FORGED LICENSES. WHILE SITUATION OBVIOUSLY VARIES FROM ONE INSPECTION SERVICE TO ANOTHER, IT IS GENERALLY FELT THAT TRAFFIC INSPECTORS FOCUS THEIR ATTENTION DISPROPORTIONATELY ON BLACKS AND TREATMENT OF THEM LACKS NICETIES OF CONDUCT TOWARDS WHITES. BLACKS SEE INSPECTORS IN SOMEWHAT THE SAME

LIGHT AS POLICE ALTHOUGH THEY ARE CONSCIOUS OF DISTINCTIONS IN THEIR ROLES.

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8. FINALLY, INVESTIGATION SHOWED THAT DECISION ON EQUIPMENT FOR INSPECTION SERVICES WILL GO FAR BEYOND SIMPLE ISSUE OF RADIOS AS THESE ORGANIZATIONS PURCHASE WIDE VARIETY OF TOTAL OR PARTIAL U.S.-ORIGIN EQUIPMENT INCLUDING PARKING METERS, TRAFFIC LIGHTS, SIGNS, VEHICLES, RADAR UNITS TO CHECK HIGHWAY SPEEDS, ETC. TOTAL IS PROBABLY IN EXCESS OF \$10 MILLION ANNUALLY. ALTERNATIVE EUROPEAN SOURCES ARE AVAILABLE FOR VIRTUALLY ALL THIS EQUIPMENT. HEADS OF INSPECTION SERVICES EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT ACCEPTING FUTURE BIDS FOR U.S.-ORIGIN EQUIPMENT WITHOUT SOME ASSURANCES ON SPARE PARTS AND SERVICING. IF LICENSE FOR RADIOS IS REFUSED, IT APPEARS UNLIKELY THAT INSPECTION SERVICES WILL IN FUTURE PURCHASE U.S. EQUIPMENT IN ANY CATEGORY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: EXPORT CONTROLS, STRATEGIC TRADE CONTROLS, TRAFFIC CONTROL, INVESTIGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PRETOR02604
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780190-0209
Format: TEL
From: PRETORIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780597/aaaadexr.tel
Line Count: 194
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 102f23a5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 85992
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2803920
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EXPORT CONTROL-SOUTH AFRICAN TRAFFIC POLICE
TAGS: ESTC, SF
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/102f23a5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014